

**STATEMENT OF
COMMISSIONER MICHAEL J. COPPS**

Re: *Empowering Consumers to Prevent and Detect Billing for Unauthorized Charges (“Cramming”)*, CG Docket No. 11-116; *Consumer Information and Disclosure*, CG Docket No. 09-158; *Truth-in-Billing and Billing Format*, CC Docket No. 98-170

It’s always a good day at the Commission when our agenda includes a consumer friendly item like today’s Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on cramming. It’s a good meeting when we can breathe life into our mandate as a consumer protection agency. This is a particularly timely item that brings the promise of much-needed relief for the thousands of consumers who complain to the FCC every year about unauthorized charges on their wireline—and their wireless—phone bills. It becomes clearer each day that wireless consumers are indeed encountering these kinds of problems, too, and we will need effective solutions in the wireless world as well as the wireline.

Because cramming can be difficult to identify and detect from a bill—a problem this notice seeks to correct—the true number of Americans who fall victim to cramming is likely well above those who have complained directly to the Commission. The NPRM identifies common-sense solutions, so that consumers will know what they are being billed for and how to take action against any fraudulent charges. An item like this would be welcome at any time but is especially important in these difficult economic times when so many families are struggling to balance their household budgets.

I look forward to the record responses to our notice, to moving forward on this critical consumer issue, and to working with the Chairman and all my colleagues on this and other proceedings on our Consumer Empowerment Agenda. And many thanks to everyone in the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau whose hard work brought us this item.